

The King's Victory



Thrust statement: The final victory in Matthew is a victory of triumph.

Scripture reading: [Matthew 28:1-20](#)

A DAY OF REFLECTION

Today is a day that the world is reflecting upon the resurrection of Jesus. Since the resurrection of Jesus is on the minds of so many, then it is appropriate that we too meditate upon Christ's victory over the forces of death and evil. If anything proves the kingship of Jesus Christ, it is His resurrection from the dead. The final victory in Matthew is a record of triumph. It is a thrilling fact that believers share in that conquest. It is in this vein that Paul writes:

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection ([Romans 6:1-5](#)).

[\[1\]](#)

God in His infinite wisdom allows every person who desires to become a child of God to share in the death, burial, and resurrection of His Son Jesus. As a result of our participation in His resurrection, we are to live a new life—a life of holiness and a life

dedicated to God's service. Yes, we are a new creation as a result of our resurrection with Him. When Paul writes his second epistle to the Corinthians, he reminds them of this fact of rebirth:

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God ([2 Corinthians 5:17-21](#)).

I appeal to each of you today to reflect upon the implications of the resurrection of Jesus and your resurrection with Him. The very fact that we have been resurrected with Jesus necessitates a change in life style. Are you living in sin? Are you neglectful of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit? Do you live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God? Has your reconciliation with God through the death and resurrection of Jesus made a difference in how you live? Just what does the resurrection of Jesus mean to you? Just what does the death of Jesus mean to you? Should the death and resurrection of Jesus affect the way you live? Again, listen to the words of Paul as he makes his appeal for purity in the lives of God's people:

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again ([2 Corinthians 5:14-15](#)).

This appeal to the resurrection is the same petition that Paul makes to the [Romans \(chapter 6\)](#). The resurrection of Jesus is central to every believer. Again, I ask, has the resurrection made a difference in the way you live? If it hasn't, then you have received God's grace in vain. Paul reminds the Corinthians that they should "no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again." He concludes his admonition to holiness by calling attention to their relationship with God: "As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain ([2 Corinthians 6:1](#)).

THE DISCIPLES THOUGHT HE WAS DEAD

Let us turn our attention again to the resurrection of Jesus and to His disciples' reaction to the resurrection. It is remarkable that His followers did not believe that He would resurrect on the third day. Matthew begins his story by calling attention to the women who came to the tomb early on the first day of the week. He writes:

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb ([Matthew 28:1](#)).

These women who had lingered at the cross came early to the tomb and wondered about

the removal of the stone. In fact, Mark gives additional information concerning the number of women and their thoughts concerning the moving of the stone:

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?" (**Mark 16:1-3**).

They wondered how the stone would be moved. They did not expect the stone to be moved. They did not count on the resurrection. They were not looking for the "living among the dead" (**Luke 24:5**). They were looking for a dead Christ, not a living Christ. Thus, the angel asked, "Why do you look for the living among the dead?" While they were in the tomb, two angels stood by them and reminded them that Jesus had told them about His resurrection while He was with them in Galilee: "'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.' Then they remembered his words" (**Luke 24:6**). It is remarkable that they did not believe in His resurrection, even though He had taught this truth repeatedly. Matthew records four predictions of Jesus about His death and resurrection:

- From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life (**Matthew 16:21**).
- When they came together in Galilee, he said to them, "**The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised to life**" (**Matthew 17:22-23**).
- Now as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside and said to them, "**We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!**" (**Matthew 20:17-19**).
- Then Jesus told them, "This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee" (**Matthew 26:31-32**).

Following the instructions of the angel, Mary Magdalene "went and told those who had been with him and who were mourning and weeping. When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it" (**Mark 16:10-11**). Later, Mark reveals that "Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen" (**16:14**). Luke concludes his book with these words:

He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.” Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high” ([Luke 24:44-49](#)).

THE BOOK OF ACTS

Many believe that Jesus died, but the world, as a whole, does not believe that He arose from the dead. But it is this message—the resurrection from the dead—that Peter on the day of Pentecost emphasized.

Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear ([Acts 2:29-33](#)).

The resurrection is emphasized throughout the book of Acts. Following the day of Pentecost, Peter had an occasion to speak to some onlookers who had just witnessed Peter’s healing of a crippled beggar. In his conversation with the onlookers, he accuses them of participation in the conviction and crucifixion of Jesus. In this speech, Peter attests to the fact of the resurrection.

The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this ([Acts 3:13-15](#)).

The next day, Peter and John were brought before the Sanhedrin. They wanted to know by what authority Peter accomplished such a miracle. Then, says Luke, Peter filled with the Holy Spirit said to them:

Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this

man stands before you healed ([Acts 4:8-10](#)).

A few years after the conversion of Paul, Paul took Barnabas and John Mark on his first missionary journey. During this journey, Paul, in Pisidian Antioch, addresses the people by telling them about Jesus. In the proclamation of God's good news, he says, "But God raised him from the dead, and for many days he was seen by those who had traveled with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now his witnesses to our people" ([Acts 13:30-31](#)). Among this number of witnesses that Paul alludes to were, no doubt, some of the women who visited the tomb early on the first day of the week. During Paul's second missionary journey, he appealed to the Thessalonians to accept the resurrection of Christ. Luke informs us that "As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead: "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ" ([Acts 17:2-3](#)).

Later, when Paul was in Athens, he again talked about the resurrection of Christ. In the course of his speech, he said, "For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead" ([Acts 17:31](#)). What is the significance of the resurrection? It proves that Jesus is God's Son. It verifies the truth of Scripture. Both in the Old Testament and the teaching of Jesus, His resurrection is clearly taught. Peter cites two Old Testament Scriptures ([Psalms 16:10](#) and [Psalms 110:1](#)) in his sermon on the day of Pentecost to prove the resurrection from the Old Testament.

Peter prefaces [Psalms 16:8-11](#) with his comments: "But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him" ([Acts 2:24](#)). This psalm reads:

⁸ I have set the LORD always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. ⁹ Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, ¹⁰ because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. ¹¹ You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand ([Psalms 16:8-11](#)).

Again, Peter relies upon another citation, as stated above, from [Psalms 110:1](#) to substantiate his belief that the Old Testament foretold the resurrection of Jesus. Prior to quoting this Psalm, he says, "God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear" ([Acts 2:32-33](#)). Peter then makes the argument that "David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said ([2:34](#)):

The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet" ([Psalms 110:1](#)).

CONCLUSION

As we conclude the message, let everyone remember that Jesus is alive. Jesus

arose from the grave on the third day. Have you been raised with Christ through baptism? If not, why not submit yourselves to Him in baptism that you too may share in His death, His burial, and His resurrection. The Old Testament predicted His resurrection. Jesus foretold His death, burial, and resurrection. The apostles proclaimed His resurrection. Are you telling others about His victory over death through His resurrection? Have you accepted the One who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life?

^[1] All Scripture citations are from *The New International Version*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House) 1984, unless stated otherwise.